

# First Round Battalion Family Readiness Group

December 2005

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## Letter From The Battalion Commander

- 2 Happy Holidays, Wow time is flying. I cannot believe the Truck Battery is well into their second month, and the mayor cell folks just passed the 90 day mark. Speaking of the Truck Battery, I had the opportunity to go visit the truck battery in Kuwait at the end of November. They are all doing very well, and Camp Arifjan continues to improve every time I get back there. They now have a Starbucks and Carl's Jr. I only ate at the Chow Hall during my visit and the food was very good, OK I had a Big Mac at the Airport, but that really doesn't count. Things are a whole lot different from our last trip over here. All of the Soldiers I spoke to, which was most of the battery, had a very positive attitude. They are truly confident, competent, fit, disciplined and courageous, and you should be very proud.

- 4-5 The Garrison folks (ASG) are doing equally as well. We had a very nice Thanksgiving, the food was excellent and most folks spent the day relaxing around City Hall. A convoy stopped in from Kuwait and I was able to enjoy Thanksgiving Dinner with a number of Soldiers from the Truck Battery; they brought their Commanding General with them and we had a great time.

We have had some really nice USO shows over the past month Aaron Tippin put on a concert and signed autographs for everybody, even 1SG Carr got an autograph while he waited at the airport in Kuwait for me to get off the plane. Just yesterday Senator Jim Inhofe, our US Senator from OK, had lunch with a bunch of our folks and then came back to the Mayor Cell and continued to visit with our Soldiers. He is very proud of the job we are doing and wanted me to share that with all of the families and let you know how thankful he is for all of our sacrifices.

I can only echo his sentiments, I am so very proud of our Soldiers and our families. What we are doing here is so important and we are seeing progress everyday. The elections are three days from now, and our Iraqi friends are very excited about the opportunity and hopeful for the future. What we are doing here is also securing our future back home, and protecting the freedoms we have come to expect out of our society.

Finally I cannot tell all of you back home in the FRG and RearD how thankful I am for all you do. I would like to borrow something I heard Mrs. Kathleen Bell, wife of General Bell say, "Army spouses are what is right with America, and I am truly in awe of all you do." I do not believe you can say it any better.

The CSM and I would like to wish all of you, on behalf of all of the deployed Soldiers a very happy holidays and safe and prosperous New Year.

Sincerely  
Tracy Banister  
LTC, FA  
Commanding

## REMINDER:

19 Dec thru 2 Jan  
Rear D will be following the half day schedule and will have office hours until 1130.

26 Dec and 2 Jan are federal holidays. 23 Dec and 30 Dec are installation training holidays.

## Letter From The HET Battery Commander

I would like to wish a Happy Holiday season to all of the 5-3 Family and Friends. We've had a great start to our deployment in Kuwait. The Soldiers and I have successfully integrated and transitioned with the Company we are replacing. We have been truly blessed with the 1158<sup>th</sup> out of the Wisconsin National Guard serving as our trainers. They have been relentless in their pursuit of outstanding instruction, and it is showing in our ranks. The Soldiers of the "Red Leg" Battery are highly trained and ready to assume the responsibility of this mission. As I look across our ranks, I see hundreds of faces ready, relevant, and motivated to drive on with the next 11 months. We have already made a great impact on Logistic Task Force 28 - our parent battalion, and I have no doubt we will continue to do so throughout our deployment.

During the past month we have flawlessly undergone a series of events designed to enhance our mission readiness. First, we had another driver's training academy. During this event we practiced winching operations, combat drop of loads on the HET trailers, a serpentine course, rollover training, changing of tires, tie down procedures, services, and preventive maintenance checks and services. Throughout the training the focus was to be at combat speed and ensure that we could perform these tasks under any circumstances.

We also conducted another convoy live fire exercise and a close quarters marksmanship course. The Red Legs learned how to execute a live fire under realistic situations. This training increased individual Soldier confidence and the confidence and trust between peers.

During the past month that we have been on the ground in Kuwait, we have also had tremendous success in our reenlistment arena. We have reenlisted 31 Red Legs between initial, mid-career, and career NCOs. The Lieutenants and I have been honored and privileged to facilitate these reenlistments. Looking into the future, it appears that this trend is nowhere near ending. Several more NCOs have expressed the will to re-up! What a special time this is for us all as these NCOs are not only renewing their commitment to freedom and liberty, but also, they are all receiving a handsome signing bonus. It couldn't be a more appropriate time of year as we

approach the Holiday Season. What is even more incredible is that they are reenlisting during a time when their lives are a little turned upside down with the deployment. As the commander of this battery, I have great respect for and take great pride in those who have chosen to serve during this rough time in their lives.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our "Rock" on the home front. Our FRG team has been nothing short of amazing. Their dedication is unsurpassed and deserves our sincerest admiration. The FRG, day in and day out, is taking care of nearly two hundred families - each with their own individual needs. With great success, each has been addressed and the 5-3 family continues to care for one another and drive on. I encourage all Red Legs to take a moment and thank their spouse for all that they do. It's a tough job and we know it!

Finally, as the Christmas season approaches, I would encourage all of you to take a moment to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas. Go beyond the presents and stockings. Find the spirit of Christmas. Spend some precious time with family and friends. Express your love for them, for life, for God and all the blessings we have been given. Pray for your loved ones who are far away, as they will be praying for you.

What was once a battalion of four separate batteries has now become one united team effort. Each Soldier is dedicated to and in support of the Soldier on his or her right and left. A solid team has formed and sibling-like bonds have emerged across all ranks. What a wonderful site it is to see such an extended family united in support of one common cause...Freedom.

Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas. May God bless you and keep you always.

Sincerely,

JOHN M. TYLER  
CPT, FA  
B/5-3 FA (CBT HET) CDR  
"REDLEGS!"

Check out this great resource of Family Programs from Association of the United States Army: [www.ausa.org/family](http://www.ausa.org/family)

This site provides info to help with deployment, family assistance, jobs, and much more.

## A Letter From The Rear Detachment Commander

Happy Holidays from everyone here on Rear Detachment! We are proud to serve the tremendous families of our deployed soldiers, and wish to extend you any help we can give during the holiday season. Allow me to pass along a few notes about what is going on here at Fort Sill with the Family Readiness Group, the Fort Sill Community, and the Rear Detachment staff.

First I would like to applaud the efforts of the Family Readiness Group. We had a wonderful Holiday Party on Dec. 13th at the REC-PLEX. The events included a pizza party, dessert contest, face painting, cookie decoration, coloring and, of course, Santa was there to ensure he had all the kid's Christmas wishes on his list. We still

have the free pictures with Santa available for pick up at Battalion Headquarters.

I would also like to recognize Harvest Church who is cosponsoring Mom's Day Out from 2-5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 17th with the Rear Detachment. There will be plenty of games, entertainment and snacks for the kids while the Mom's can relax, shop, eat or all of the above!

I would like to highlight a few things that will help during this holiday season. If you plan on leaving or vacationing, please contact your FRG leadership and leave a number and address where you'll be staying. This is extremely important in case of an emergency overseas. If you live on-post, the

MPs will give more attention to your house at your request. To contact the MPs, call the MP Desk at 442-2101. For those that are staying, Fort Sill has much to offer. Check out the MWR summary and Religious Schedule accompanying the newsletter for more details. If anyone would like to register for the Toys for Tots program, see SSG Vanoven at Battalion Headquarters. The deadline for registering is 22 December.

Again, I wish you safe and happy holidays. God Bless you and your family, and most of all, our troops overseas!

CPT Michael Donahue  
5-3 FA, Rear Detachment  
Commander

## Equipping Families for Deployment

This is a great program that will help prepare families by training them for success during and after a deployment. It will be held January 20 & 21 at the Patriot Club. The core of the seminar will be the Officers' Christian Fellowship Wives of Warriors (WoW) program. WoW is a ministry of hope and encouragement for military wives who experience short term separations and deployments. There will also be fun, crea-

tive, and age appropriate sessions for teens and elementary-age children. Watchcare for Children up to 5 years old will be available at the Tincher Child Development Center.

For more information or to register, contact:  
Julie Moose 531-2632  
cjmoose93@sbcglobal.net

## Congratulations to the Hobson and Vanoven Families

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate CPT Hobson's family and SSG Vanoven's family for being nominated from 5-3 for Family Of The Year for Fort Sill. Both of these families were recognized by Brigade and III Corps for their exemplary service and support for the Fort Sill community. They have illustrated strong family values and deserve to be commended. Congratulations!

Here are some tips to help prevent your pipes from freezing if you plan on going away during cold weather:

- If you go on vacation or will be away, don't turn your heat off. Leave it on at least 60°.
- Leave cabinet doors open, especially under sinks or where you know there are pipes.
- Close all windows near pipes.
- Allow a faucet to drip slightly with lukewarm water to minimize freezing.





## New Year's Eve Parties On Post

Ring out 2005 and bring in the New Year at one of the three Fort Sill New Year's Eve Parties Dec. 31. Tickets are on sale now at the facilities.

### **Patriot Club**

Cruise into 2006 aboard the "Patriot" when the Patriot Club hosts a New Year's all ranks Party. It's Anchors Away at 7 p.m. with cocktails and appetizers. Dinner is served at 8 p.m. Ticket price includes a Captain's Feast of steak, lobster tail and shrimp cocktail and all the festivities. Dance to the sounds of "Talk of the Town," a 16-piece orchestra. At midnight, enjoy a balloon drop, champagne toast and a continental breakfast. A

cruise vacation for two will be given away. Cost is \$65 per club member or \$70 per non-member. Call 442-5300 for more information.

### **Impact Zone**

Ring in the New Year at the Impact Zone New Year's Eve Party from 8 p.m. to 3 a.m. Break out the bell bottoms, hip huggers and platform shoes. Dance, party and celebrate the New Year in the '70s style. Ticket price includes a midnight champagne toast, breakfast, party favors and lots of door prizes. Advance tickets cost \$7 per individual or \$12 per couple. Tickets at the door are \$8 per person. Call 442-

0355 for more information.

### **Twin Oaks Bowling Center**

The whole family can enjoy a Cosmic Celebration of the New Year at Twin Oaks Bowling Center from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. Bowl in the New Year with Cosmic Bowling, party favors and give-a-ways. This year, the Bowling Center will offer a rent-a-lane package for \$70 which allows up to 8 people on that lane for the entire evening. All ticket prices include cosmic bowling, shoe rental, music, free play on selected video games and give-a-ways. For information, call 442-2882.

## Sports Programs

**Racquetball Clinic** Dec. 17 with a Tournament Dec. 20 through 22 at Rinehart Fitness Center.

**Basketball Tournament** Dec. 19 through 22 at Rinehart Fitness Center. There is a \$25 entry fee.

**Water Aerobics** offered Dec. 14 through Jan. 6 on Wednesdays from 6 to 7 a.m.; Thursdays from 5 to 6 p.m.; and Fridays from 11:30 a.m. to

12:30 p.m. at Rinehart Fitness Center.

**Lifeguard Training** will be offered Dec. 27 through 30 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily at Honeycutt Fitness Center.

**3-in-1 Boot Camp** for cardio, abs and strength training which will run December through January on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:45 a.m.

to 12:30 p.m. at Goldner Fitness Center.

**Dodge Ball Clinic**, Dec. 27 at 1 p.m. with a Tournament Dec. 27 through 30.

For more information on any of these programs, call the Sports Office at 442-3575.

## Winterize Your Vehicle

Winterize your car at the Fort Sill Auto Crafts Center. Anti-freeze testers are available, and the center will dispose of your old anti-freeze. A mandatory safety class is available every day 30 minutes after the center opens.

Or, if you don't want to do it yourself, the Auto Crafts Center staff will winterize your vehicle for you. The

specialists at the center will inspect hoses, belts, wipers, and tires at no cost, and perform a cooling system flush and fill if necessary. Prices may vary depending upon the amount of service required. The cooling system flush includes labor, one gallon of anti-freeze and one bottle of cooling system flush.

Stop by the Auto Crafts Center, 2503

Ringgold Road, or call 442-5152. Hours of operation for services and bay rental are Wednesday through Friday from 1 to 9 p.m., and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## Camp Cowabunga Winter Festival

The Exceptional Family Member Program will offer Camp Cowabunga Winter Festival Dec. 19 at the RecPlex, 2502 Sheridan Road, for special needs children and their parents who still have holiday shopping to do. The program is free and open to all children with disabilities, ages 6 through 22, and their siblings, ages

8 and older, in the Lawton-Fort Sill area. Activities will include special visitors, Christmas caroling, one-on-one mentors, and snacks and lunch will be provided. Space is limited, so early registration is suggested. Call 442-6818 for more information.



## Dashing Through the Holidays

Make your holidays merry and bright:

- Start new traditions
- Volunteer for a good cause
- Get plenty of rest and exercise
- Create a budget and stick to it
- Set realistic expectations
- Seek emotional support

### *You name it . . . We can help.*

If you need help coping with holiday stress, call Military OneSource. We are here to listen. Military OneSource offers six, non-medical counseling sessions in the local community for individuals and families at no cost.

Military OneSource is a virtual extension of existing installation services. We are here to support all active duty, Guard, Reserve (regardless of activation status) and their family members.

Call a consultant 24/7!

From the United States: 1-800-342-9647

From overseas: \*800-342-9647

Collect from overseas: 1-484-530-5908

En español llame al: 1-877-888-0727

TTY/TDD accessible: 1-866-607-6794

*\*Use access code before dialing the toll free number. Access codes can be found online.*

[www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com)

User ID: military Password: onesource

**A World of Good Wishes  
from Military OneSource**



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